

Amendments to the Claims:

Claims 1-5 are pending in this application. Claim 1 is independent.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): An exposure method for exposing a pattern of a mask onto an object, said method comprising the steps of:

illuminating ~~[[a]]~~ the mask using an illumination system that forms an effective light source having a first part that mainly includes s-polarized light and a second part that mixes s-polarized light and p-polarized light, the first and second parts having different light intensities;
and

projecting, through a projection optical system having the effective light source at its pupil plane, and a numerical aperture of 0.9 or greater, a pattern of the mask onto an object to be exposed.

2 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): An exposure method according to claim 1, wherein the first part of the effective light source has an annular shape ~~in which the s-polarized light polarizes in a tangential direction of the annular shape.~~

3 (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED): An exposure method according to claim 2, wherein the second part of the effective light source has a circular shape that is located inside the first part of the effective light source.

4 (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED): An exposure method according to claim 2, wherein the second part of the effective light source has an annular shape corresponding to the shape of the aperture stop that is located inside the first part of the effective light source.

5 (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED): An exposure method according to claim 1, wherein light intensity of the second part of the effective light source is smaller than that of the first part.

6-17 (CANCELLED):

18 (NEW): An exposure method according to claim 1, wherein the pattern of the mask has plural line patterns, and the second part is located outside the first part.

19 (NEW): An exposure method according to claim 1, wherein the pattern of the mask has plural hole patterns that are arranged longitudinally and laterally, the first part is arranged longitudinally and/or laterally, and the second part is arranged obliquely.

20 (NEW): An exposure method according to claim 19, wherein the effective light source has a cross-shaped light-shielding part.